

THE SOURCE

Brought to you by Wellspring Family Services EAP

Dec - Feb 2010

"A resource for you and your family."



SETTING THINGS STRAIGHT

Health myths that may surprise you

MYTH: Milk creates phlegm.

FACT: Studies among people infected with cold viruses found that drinking milk does not increase nasal secretions.

MYTH: Cold weather causes colds and flu.

FACT: Cold temperatures may keep you indoors, where germs spread more easily, but people who get chilled are not more likely to get sick.

MYTH: Green mucus means you need antibiotics.

FACT: Unless symptoms have persisted for more than two weeks, you probably don't have a sinus infection that needs antibiotics.

MYTH: Sugar makes kids hyper.

FACT: Too many sweets can cause cavities and put children at risk for overweight and obesity, but sugar does not affect behavior.

MYTH: You need to drink at least eight glasses of water every day.

FACT: Fluid intake can be met through juice, milk, and other beverages. There's no scientific evidence that healthy people need as much as eight glasses of water per day. Need varies with factors such as climate and activity level.

Sources: Don't Swallow Your Gum! Myths, Half Truths & Outright Lies About Your Health & Body, by Dr. Aaron E. Carroll and Dr. Rachel C. Vreeman, St. Martin's Griffin; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Academy of Pediatrics

Boost your brain power

Answer these questions after you read something that you want to remember:

- What was it about?
- What parts of it were most important?
- What's my opinion on the subject?
- What element makes it unique?
- What is the key idea?
- Does this resemble or parallel anything I've already learned or experienced?
- Answer the questions mentally or in writing, whichever works best for you.

Source: Double Your Brain Power: Increase Your Memory by Using All of Your Brain All the Time, by Jean Marie Stine, Prentice Hall Publishers

Mind games

The next time you're frustrated by a difficult word on a crossword puzzle, remind yourself that it's good exercise for your brain.

Activities that give your mind a workout can help slow the mental decline associated with Alzheimer's disease.

Reading, writing, playing board or card games, playing music, and taking part in group discussions are other exercises that help keep your brain in shape.

Source: Neurology, Vol. 73, pg. 356

stress less

I'M LISTENING...
ARE YOU?

5 ways to improve communication in your relationship

1. **Every day share something you appreciate about each other.** Even simple things like "I like the way you laugh" will make a partner feel noticed and valued.
2. **Describe your hopes and dreams so that your partner can help make them happen.** Some examples might be: "I'd like to run a marathon in the next two years" or "I want to learn how to speak Spanish."
3. **Always let each other know when plans change.** Remembering simple things like "I'll have to be out of town an extra day" is crucial to staying in sync and feeling connected.
4. **Clear up big or little mysteries before they become suspicions, jealousies, false assumptions, or resentments.** You may need to ask a specific question such as "You promised you'd pick up the dry cleaning after work. What happened?"
5. **State what you want rather than what you don't want.** Instead of "I get angry when you don't leave messages," say "When you get my voice mail, please don't say 'it's me' and hang up. Tell me what you were calling about."

Source: www.smartmarriages.com

“Don't worry that your children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you.”

— Robert Fulghum

PROBLEM SOLVING

How to handle criticism

A positive way to deal with criticism from a boss or co-worker is to view the criticism as important information that will help you do your job better — not as a personal attack.

Try to separate your ego from the situation and see the criticism as an opportunity to work together to develop a plan that will improve things rather than seeing yourself as a victim.

Make an effort to understand the reasons behind co-workers' difficult behavior. If they generally act in a reasonable manner, they may be reacting to stress overload in their own lives.

Source: American Psychological Association

UNEXPECTED CHANGE

What to do when life throws you a curve

If an unexpected event has turned your life upside down, engage in at least one activity every day that you can control completely.

Taking up a hobby or striving for a goal that involves no one's effort but your own can help you regain a sense of power.

It may also be helpful — and more useful — to focus on where you want to be a year from now. Instead of incessantly asking questions like What went wrong? or Why did this happen to me?, view the change as a starting point, not a setback.

Source: *AdaptAbility: How to Survive Change You Didn't Ask For*, by M.J. Ryan, Broadway Books



IT DEPENDS...

Should you exercise when you're sick?

It's generally OK if your symptoms are "above the neck." If you have a runny nose, sneezing, or a scratchy throat, begin at a slow pace, like walking. If your symptoms don't bother you, increase the intensity after a few minutes.

WAIT if your symptoms are "below the neck." If you have high fever, sore muscles or joints, vomiting or diarrhea, or a productive cough, let the cold or flu run its course. Before you start exercising again, make sure all of your symptoms are gone.

Please be considerate of other people and stay out of the gym until you're feeling better.

Source: American College of Sports Medicine

your health

SOCIAL GRACES

How to remember names when you meet new people

Try to repeat the name as many times as possible without sounding foolish.

Shake the person's hand and say "I'm so happy to meet you, Mary." Then say such things as "I like your shirt, Mary," or "Where do you live, Mary?"

If possible, excuse yourself and come back later and say something like "I'm so glad I got to meet you, Mary."

Source: *Thelma J. Lofquist, PhD, gerontologist, educator, and author*

The power of gratitude

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life.

It turns what we have into enough, and more.

It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.

Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.”

— Melody Beattie

ON THE ROAD

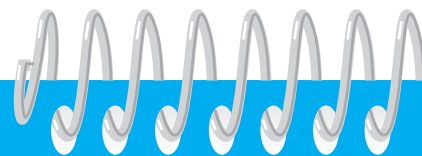
Drive now, talk later

When it comes to the risk for car accidents while driving, there may be no difference between using a hands-free cell phone or a hand-held cell phone.

It's not just the dialing or holding the phone; the conversation itself is a distraction, says Ross Rader of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

A study at the University of Utah found that cell phone driving may even be worse than driving and drinking. Participants in the study used a simulator to drive a stretch of highway three times — once while sober, once while using a cell phone, and once with a blood alcohol level of .08. Cell phone users had more accidents (three compared to none) and longer reaction times than while driving under the influence.

Sources: *Insurance Institute for Highway Safety; University of Utah*



Doc Talk

POWER TO THE PATIENT

It's Never Too Late!

When it comes to reasons not to improve health habits, I've heard and used more than a few. One common theme is that it's too late — "I've done it this way for so long and dodged the bullet so far — there's no point in changing now." Not so! Consider these recent research results:

1. **Quitting smoking** at ages 51 or 52 can add 3.4 years to your life.
2. **Men who increase their physical activity** beginning at ages 50–60 reduce their mortality by as much as if they were smokers who quit. They also enjoy the same benefit as if they had practiced a constantly high level of physical activity.
3. **Women and men who become physically active** as late as ages 70–85 enjoy significantly longer survival.

It's not just quantity of life that can improve with lifestyle changes at older ages, it's also quality of life. In another recent study, people with a higher level of physical activity at age 78 were 100% more likely to remain independent while performing activities of daily living at age 85.

No matter what your age, or how long you may have had less than ideal health habits, make a change to live longer and better.

William J. Mayer, MD, MPH
Medical Editor

Do you have a subject you would like the doctor to discuss? E-mail DocTalk@HopeHealth.com.



your health matters

What is Wellspring Family Services EAP?

Wellspring Family Services Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here to deliver quality assessment and referral services to you and your immediate family. The EAP is completely confidential, and there is no charge to you for our services.

Thank you for choosing Wellspring Family Services — your socially responsible EAP. Your EAP helps to support community programs that provide child care, mental health counseling, domestic violence intervention, and resources to secure stable housing for those in need. Visit www.wellspringfs.org to learn more.

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- Family problems
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- Work-related problems
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- And a variety of other concerns facing individuals and families today.

Our network of providers is available throughout the United States for consultation and referral.

As your EAP, our goal is to be a source of ideas and solutions for you to use in solving both business and personal problems.

BODY, MIND, & SOUL

“Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible.”
— Charles Caleb Cotton

“You must learn something from the mistakes of others. You can’t possibly live long enough to make them all yourself.”
— Sam Levenson

“What some people mistake for the high cost of living is really the cost of living high.”
— Doug Larson

Wellspring Family Services EAP Newsletter, The Source, is distributed quarterly. The information presented is not meant to replace the advice of your physician. If you are having health problems, or are considering changes in your diet or exercise program, please consult your primary care physician.

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